

VISUALIZATION ANALYSIS OF RURAL TOURISM AND AGRITOURISM RESEARCH BASED ON WEB OF SCIENCE

Bao-Zhong Yuan 

Huazhong Agricultural University, China
✉ yuanbz@mail.hzau.edu.cn

Abstract. Agritourism offers significant potential to foster socio-economic development while reducing environmental impacts. This study examines the current landscape and emerging themes in agritourism and rural tourism using bibliometric analysis. Publications indexed in the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (WoS) core database were analyzed with CiteSpace and VOSviewer software. A total of 2,027 articles and review papers published between 2005 and October 8, 2024 – including 18 highly cited papers – were included. Most publications were written in English, spanning 101 countries or regions, and appeared in 389 journals and book series. The leading journals were “Sustainability”, “Tourism Management”, “Journal of Sustainable Tourism”, “Land”, “Current Issues in Tourism”. The most active countries in the field were China, Spain, Italy, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Using Co-occurrence network visualization in VOSviewer, the keywords were grouped into nine distinct research clusters. Most studies focused on the three Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), Goal 15 (Life on Land), and Goal 2 (Zero Hunger). The results of this analysis provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of research and suggest directions for future studies in rural tourism and agritourism. Additionally, the findings provide useful insights for students seeking graduate programs and for researchers selecting journals that publish leading work in this field.

Keywords: agritourism, rural tourism, rural revitalization, scientometric analysis, VOSviewer, Web of Science

INTRODUCTION

In the context of China’s Rural Revitalization Strategy, rural tourism has emerged as a “hot spot” in the tourism market. It is recognized as a crucial driver for promoting rural revitalization at a time when comprehensive rural revitalization is a national priority. Studies have shown a close link between sustainable tourism and rural tourism, highlighting innovation as a vital factor for ensuring the sector’s growth and long-term sustainability. Nature-based tourism, a significant component of global tourism, also contributes greatly to sustainable development.

Bibliometric analysis is widely used to track research trends, identify emerging topics, analyze cooperation patterns, and map the knowledge structure of a field. Several scholars have applied bibliometric and visualization techniques, such as VOSviewer and CiteSpace, to explore rural tourism and agritourism research. For example, Roman and Kawęcki (2024) used a literature review and cluster analysis to examine agritourism, while Ndhlovu and Dube (2024) highlighted agritourism’s potential in developing countries. Tourist experience, as part of the experience economy, has also emerged as a key research focus in rural tourism studies, especially in China (Zhou et al., 2024).

A comprehensive review of rural tourism research in both China and the broader international context is

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essential to compare and analyze differences in research hotspots, temporal and spatial evolution, and disciplinary integration within the field (Li and Zhu, 2023). Four core driving forces—marketability, participatory, crisis mitigation and sustainability—have shaped the complex development of rural tourism enterprises (Priatmoko et al., 2023). Through the application of VOSviewer and CiteSpace, scholars are better equipped to gain a systematic understanding of rural tourism experience research and to identify emerging directions for future study (Guan and Huang, 2023). Mohanan and Shekhar (2022) Related studies have explored wellness tourism (Mohanan and Shekhar, 2022) and the development of ecotourism (Le and Nguyen, 2023) using similar bibliometric approaches.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further strengthened the relationship between rural tourism and outdoor recreational activities (Ferreira et al., 2022). Since 2004, rural tourism's impact on rural economic development has remained a significant focus of research (Ruiz-Real et al., 2022). Major research themes include tourist and resident satisfaction, community-based tourism's role in economic growth, stakeholder participation, decision-making processes, and heritage conservation (Krittayaruangroj et al., 2023). A bibliometric review has mapped existing research on innovations in sustainable tourism, particularly focusing on “smart” tourism concepts (Pileliene et al., 2024). Analyzing research on protected areas and nature-based tourism offers valuable insights into key themes and emerging trends, supporting the advancement of knowledge in the field (Silva et al., 2023). In addition, research themes in rural tourism have evolved from the fields of rural planning in China (Liu and Liu, 2024) and broader tourism studies (Zhong et al., 2024).

Sustainability continues to be a central theme in tourism research, particularly as nature-based tourism grows, placing increasing pressure on natural resources. Cavalcante et al. (2021) provided a bibliometric analysis of tourism sustainability research, with a specific focus on marketing and branding. Molina-Collado et al. (2022) examined scientific research on sustainability in hospitality and tourism from 1994 to 2020 through bibliometric and science mapping analyses, offering insights into future research directions and practical implications for managers and policymakers. Additionally, Sun and Yuan (2024) analyzed the maize (corn) intercropping system using Web of Science data, while Yuan

and Sun (2023) explored research trends in rice cultivation and greenhouse gas emissions, also utilizing the Web of Science database.

This paper aims to apply bibliometric methods to analyze publications on the topics of “rural tourism” and “agritourism,” utilizing the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (WoS) core database. CiteSpace and VOSviewer software were employed for bibliometric analysis. Citation topics and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were also examined based on WoS data. The study seeks to map the key research areas in “rural tourism” and “agritourism,” contributing to the field by identifying emerging trends, categorizing central topics and subtopics, and offering guidance for future researchers in selecting relevant and promising research directions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Web of Science and Data collection

Publication counts were obtained from the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection, specifically the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) (1900–present) and the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) (2005–present). Data collection was completed on October 8, 2024. The following keywords were used for the topic search (TS): “rural tourism” OR “agritourism”, along with additional terms such as “agricultural tourism,” “agritourism farms,” “farm tourism,” “integrated rural tourism,” “rural accommodation,” “rural building integration,” “rural tourism development,” and “sustainable rural tourism”. The document types selected were articles and review articles, with publication years spanning from 2005 to 2024. A total of 2,027 publications were retrieved from the WoS Core Collection.

Impact Factors

Impact factors (IF 2023 and IF 5-year) were sourced from the Journal Citation Report (JCR) 2023, published in June 2024, which provided the most recent data available.

VOSviewer and CiteSpace

VOSviewer (www.vosviewer.com) is a free bibliometric visualization tool, known for its intuitive and user-friendly interface. In this study, the default parameter settings of VOSviewer (version 1.6.20) were applied for the bibliometric analysis. CiteSpace (Basic version 6.3.R1) is

a software tool designed for visual analysis of scholarly literature within a research field, area, or discipline, collectively referred to as a knowledge domain. It is particularly useful for identifying trends and keyword bursts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Document Type and Language of Publication

A total of 2,027 publications were identified in the Web of Science Index, with 1,602 (79.033%) in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and 970 (47.854%) in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE). The document types were predominantly articles (1,965, 96.941%) and review articles (62, 3.059%). Most of the papers were published in English (1,977, 97.533%), while the remaining were in other languages: Spanish (36, 1.776%), Portuguese (5, 0.247%), German (4, 0.197%), French (2, 0.099%), among others.

Publication Output

Figure 1 illustrates the publication trends on rural tourism and agritourism research from 2005 to 2024. The

highest number of publications occurred in 2022, with 313 papers. Of the total 2,027 papers, the *h*-index is 95, the total number of citations stands at 45,738, and the average citations per article is 22.56.

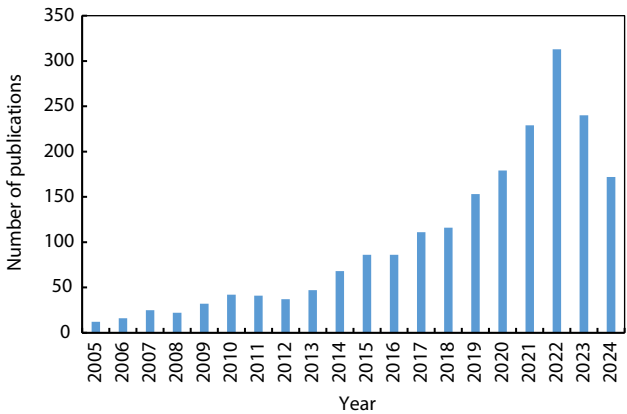


Fig. 1. Trends in published papers on rural tourism and agritourism topic research from 2005 to 2024
Source: Own elaboration.

Table 1. Top 20 WoS categories and research areas on rural tourism and agritourism topic research from 2005 to 2024

Rank	WoS categories			Research areas		
	Categories	No. papers	% total papers	Areas	No. papers	% total papers
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism	639	31.524	Environmental Sciences Ecology	774	38.185
2	Environmental Studies	568	28.022	Social Sciences Other Topics	673	33.202
3	Environmental Sciences	552	27.232	Science Technology Other Topics	501	24.716
4	Green Sustainable Science Technology	463	22.842	Business Economics	328	16.182
5	Management	219	10.804	Agriculture	148	7.301
6	Geography	128	6.315	Geography	128	6.315
7	Economics	99	4.884	Public Administration	81	3.996
8	Regional Urban Planning	79	3.897	Sociology	77	3.799
9	Sociology	77	3.799	Engineering	67	3.305
10	Agronomy	51	2.516	Computer Science	58	2.861
11	Business	48	2.368	Food Science Technology	38	1.875
12	Agricultural Economics Policy	44	2.171	Public Environmental Occupational Health	35	1.727
13	Agriculture Multidisciplinary	43	2.121	Development Studies	33	1.628

Table 1 – cont.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Computer Science Information Systems	39	1.924	Telecommunications	30	1.48
15	Food Science Technology	38	1.875	Physical Geography	29	1.431
16	Multidisciplinary Sciences	38	1.875	Urban Studies	22	1.085
17	Public Environmental Occupational Health	35	1.727	Psychology	21	1.036
18	Development Studies	33	1.628	Mathematics	18	0.888
19	Social Sciences Interdisciplinary	32	1.579	Construction Building Technology	17	0.839
20	Telecommunications	30	1.48	Geology	17	0.839

Source: own elaboration.

Web of Science Categories and Research Areas

A total of 116 WoS subject categories and 76 research areas are associated with research on rural tourism and agritourism from 2005 to 2024. The top 20 WoS categories and research areas are presented in Table 1. The top five WoS categories are: Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism (639, 31.524%), Environmental Studies (568, 28.022%), Environmental Sciences (552, 27.232%), Green and Sustainable Science & Technology (463, 22.842%), and Management (219, 10.804%). The top five research areas include: Environmental Sciences

& Ecology (774, 38.185%), Social Sciences, Other Topics (673, 33.202%), Science & Technology, Other Topics (501, 24.716%), Business & Economics (328, 16.182%), and Agriculture (148, 7.301%). WoS publications are mapped to WoS categories, which offer more detailed classifications than research areas.

Journal Co-Citation Analysis

A total of 2,027 publications were published across 389 journals and book series. The top 21 core journals, each with more than 21 papers, are displayed in Table 2. This

Table 2. Top 21 core Journals on rural tourism and agritourism topic research indexed in the WoS

Rank	Journal	TP	Ratio	IF 2023	IF 5 year	QC	Citations	Avg. citations
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	“Sustainability”	360	17.76	3.3	3.6	Q2	5,082	14.1
2	“Tourism Management”	79	3.897	10.9	11.5	Q1	7,720	97.7
3	“Journal of Sustainable Tourism”	74	3.651	6.9	9.5	Q1	3,267	44.1
4	“Land”	58	2.861	3.2	3.4	Q2	471	8.1
5	“Current Issues in Tourism”	56	2.763	5.7	6.7	Q1	1,359	24.3
6	“Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research”	42	2.072	4.3	4.4	Q1	754	18.0
7	“Tourism Geographies”	40	1.973	4.1	7.5	Q1	1,282	32.1
8	“International Journal of Tourism Research”	39	1.924	4.1	4.7	Q1	996	25.5
9	“Journal of Rural Studies”	39	1.924	5.1	5.5	Q1	1,997	51.2
10	“Agriculture Base”	36	1.776	3.3	3.5	Q1	214	5.9
11	“Journal of Travel Research”	32	1.579	8	9.7	Q1	976	30.5
12	“Land Use Policy”	31	1.529	6	6.5	Q1	1,285	41.5

Table 2 – cont.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	“Tourism Management Perspectives”	30	1.48	7.3	8	Q1	935	31.2
14	“Fresenius Environmental Bulletin”	29	1.431				138	4.8
15	“Journal of Travel Tourism Marketing”	29	1.431	8.2	8.5	Q1	1,237	42.7
16	“Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management”	27	1.332	7.6	8.3	Q1	870	32.2
17	“Annals of Tourism Research”	26	1.283	10.4	11.2	Q1	1,332	51.2
18	“Journal of Destination Marketing Management”	24	1.184	8.9	8.3	Q1	809	33.7
19	“Tourism Economics”	23	1.135	3.6	4.4	Q1	359	15.6
20	“Journal of Environmental Protection and Ecology”	21	1.036				50	2.4
21	“Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism”	21	1.036	3.1	3.9	Q1	514	24.5

TP – Total Publications, Ratio – Ratio of 2,027 (%), IF 2023 – Journal Impact Factor in 2023, IF5 year – Journal Impact Factor over 5 years, QC – Quartile in Category.

Source: Own elaboration.

table includes the total number of articles, journal impact factors for 2023 (IF) and the 5-year impact factor (IF 5-year), quartile rank in the category, total citations, and average citations per paper. If a journal belongs to multiple WoS categories, the highest quartile rank was selected.

The top five journals are:

- “Sustainability” (360, 17.76%),
- “Tourism Management” (79, 3.897%),
- “Journal of Sustainable Tourism” (74, 3.651%),
- “Land” (58, 2.861%),
- “Current Issues in Tourism” (56, 2.763%).

Among the top 21 journals in Table 2, 17 were in Quartile 1, two were in Quartile 2, and two did not have an impact factor in 2023. Journals in the Q1 rank are considered to have the highest impact. Based on the average citations per paper, the top five journals with more than 42.7 citations per paper are:

- “Tourism Management” (97.7),
- “Annals of Tourism Research” (51.2),
- “Journal of Rural Studies” (51.2),
- “Journal of Sustainable Tourism” (44.1),
- “Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing” (42.7).

Among the 389 journals, 75 met the threshold of five citations and were connected to each other, forming 11 clusters. The network visualization map of citation

connections in the field of rural tourism and agritourism, based on WoS, is shown in Fig. 2, with the clusters represented in different colors. The size of the circles reflects the total number of publications per journal.

Countries/Regions Co-Authorship Analysis

A total of 101 countries or regions contributed to 2,027 papers. Table 3 presents the top 20 countries or regions that published 31 or more papers, based on the WoS database. Among these, China, Spain, Italy, the United States, and the United Kingdom were the leading contributors, each publishing over 100 papers. Furthermore, the five countries with the highest average number of citations per paper – each with 34 or more citations – were the United Kingdom (46.2), Portugal (44.9), Germany (38.3), South Korea (36.7) and Canada (34.0).

Figure 3 illustrates the publication trends for the top five countries in rural tourism and agritourism research between 2005 and 2024. China has emerged as the most prolific contributor, demonstrating a sharp increase in output from 2017 onwards, with more than 20 papers published annually. Additionally, Taiwan, a region of China, has shown significant research strength in this field.

Of the 101 countries or regions, 60 met the minimum threshold of five publications. Among these, 59 were interconnected through co-authorship networks and were categorized into seven clusters (Fig. 4). Based on the

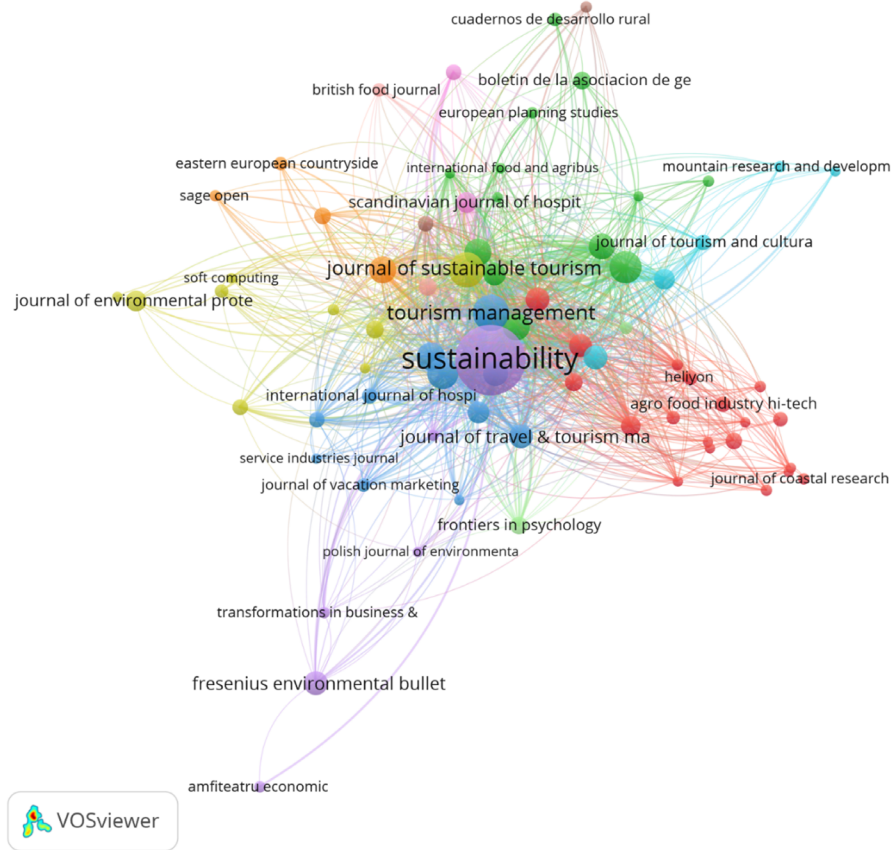


Fig. 2. Network map of citation journals with a minimum of 5 publications in the field of rural tourism and agritourism, based on WoS, with 75 circles and 11 clusters
Source: own elaboration.

Table 3. Top 20 countries or regions publishing research papers on rural tourism and agritourism topics based on WoS data

Rank	Countries/ Regions	Re- cords	% of 2,027	Citations	Avg. citations
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Peoples R China	669	33.004	7974	11.9
2	Spain	233	11.495	6002	25.8
3	USA	226	11.149	7137	31.6
4	Italy	134	6.611	3258	24.3
5	England	100	4.933	4620	46.2
6	Taiwan	78	3.848	1799	23.1
7	Portugal	77	3.799	3460	44.9
8	Romania	75	3.7	982	13.1
9	Australia	72	3.552	2024	28.1

Table 3 – cont.

1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Poland	62	3.059	978	15.8
11	South Korea	60	2.96	2204	36.7
12	Japan	40	1.973	578	14.5
13	Malaysia	40	1.973	1053	26.3
14	Canada	36	1.776	1224	34.0
15	Norway	36	1.776	1089	30.3
16	Germany	35	1.727	482	13.8
17	Iran	35	1.727	1302	38.3
18	Serbia	32	1.579	383	12.0
19	Sweden	32	1.579	806	25.2
20	Turkey	31	1.529	371	12.0

Source: own elaboration.

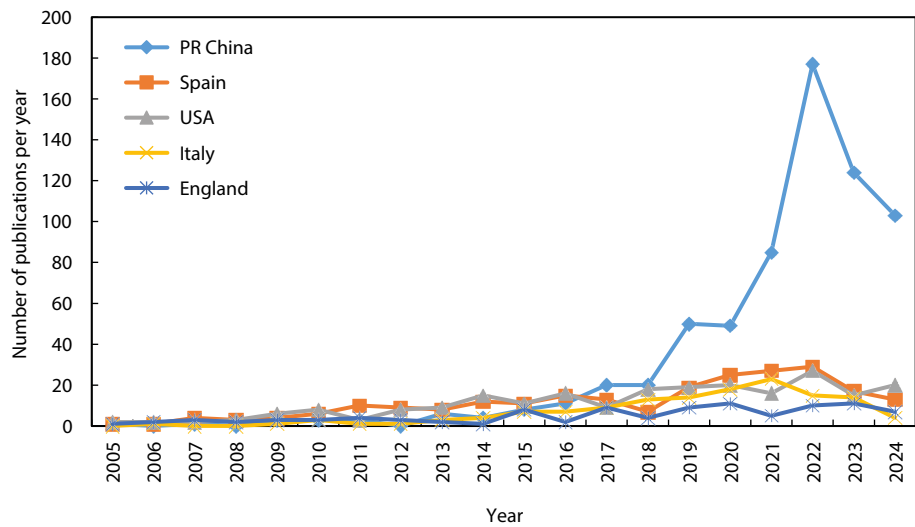


Fig. 3. Publication trends for the top five countries in rural tourism and agritourism
Source: own elaboration.

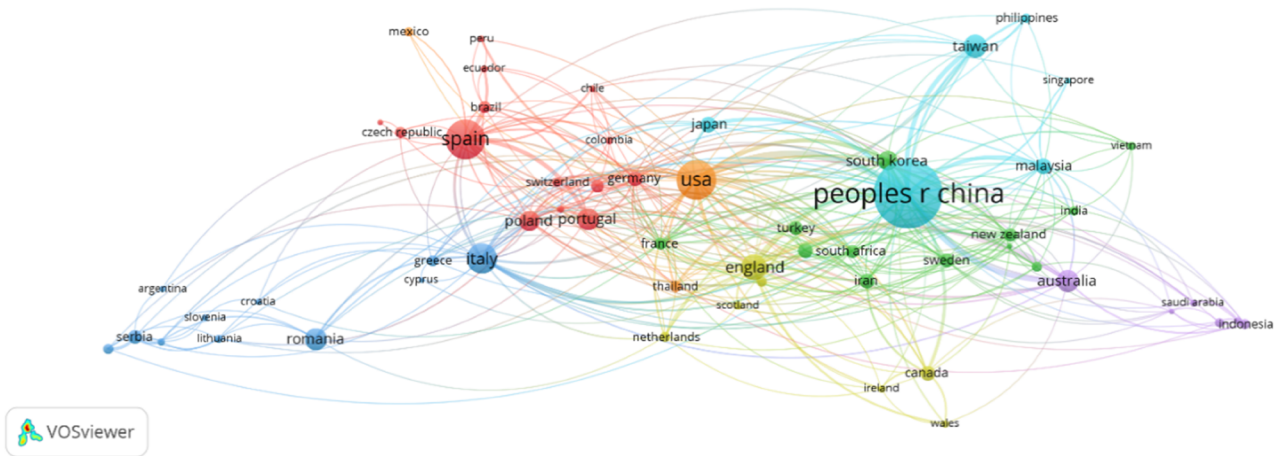


Fig. 4. Country co-authorship network map for rural tourism and agritourism research based on WoS, with 59 nodes and seven clusters
Source: own elaboration.

number of publications within each cluster (from highest to lowest):

- Cluster 1 (Red): 14 countries/regions, including Spain, Portugal, Poland, and Germany.
- Cluster 2 (Green): 12 countries/regions, including South Korea, Norway, Iran, Sweden, and Turkey.
- Cluster 3 (Blue): 11 countries/regions, including Italy, Romania, and Serbia.

- Cluster 4 (Yellow): 7 countries/regions, including the United Kingdom and Canada.
- Cluster 5 (Violet): 6 countries/regions, including Australia and Indonesia.
- Cluster 6 (Light Blue): 6 countries/regions, including China, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Japan.
- Cluster 7 (Orange): 3 countries/regions, including the United States, Thailand, and Mexico.

Organizations (Affiliations) Co-Authorship Analysis

According to publication data from the WoS database, a total of 1,926 organizations contributed to 2,027 publications. Table 4 presents the top 21 organizations, ranked by the number of publications (more than 14 papers), their share of the total 2,027 publications, and their respective countries. The leading organizations were Universidad De Extremadura (50 publications; 2.467%), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (38 publications; 1.875%), the Institute of Geographic Sciences Natural Resources Research CAS (26 publications; 1.283%),

and North Carolina State University (25 publications; 1.233%). These 21 organizations were predominantly located in China (nine organizations), followed by the United States (three organizations), Romania (two organizations), Spain (two organizations), and one organization each from Italy, Portugal, Serbia, South Africa, and South Korea.

All Keywords Co-Occurrence Analysis

To investigate the co-occurrence of keywords, we analyzed author keywords, Keywords Plus, and all keywords as distinct units. For the author keywords, using the full

Table 4. Top 21 organizations publishing research on rural tourism and agritourism topic research based on WoS data

Rank	Organizations	Records	% of 2,027	Country
1	Universidad De Extremadura	50	2.467	Spain
2	Chinese Academy of Sciences	38	1.875	China
3	Institute of Geographic Sciences Natural Resources Research CAS	26	1.283	China
4	North Carolina State University	25	1.233	USA
5	Hong Kong Polytechnic University	22	1.085	China
6	Sun Yat Sen University	22	1.085	China
7	Universidade De Aveiro	22	1.085	Portugal
8	University of Granada	22	1.085	Spain
9	Zhejiang University	21	1.036	China
10	State University System of Florida	20	0.987	USA
11	University of Johannesburg	19	0.937	South Africa
12	University of North Carolina	18	0.888	USA
13	Nankai University	17	0.839	China
14	University of Novi Sad	17	0.839	Serbia
15	Bucharest University of Economic Studies	16	0.789	Romania
16	Nanjing University	16	0.789	China
17	Sejong University	15	0.74	South Korea
18	Banat University of Agricultural Sciences Veterinary Medicine	14	0.691	Romania
19	University of Chinese Academy of Sciences CAS	14	0.691	China
20	University of Molise	14	0.691	Italy
21	Zhejiang Gongshang University	14	0.691	China

Source: own elaboration.

counting method for co-occurrence analysis, a total of 5,570 author keywords were identified. Among these, 235 keywords met the threshold of five occurrences, which were then organized into thirteen clusters in the network visualization. The top twenty most frequent co-occurring author keywords, each appearing more than 23 times, were: rural tourism, agritourism, tourism, sustainable development, rural development, sustainable tourism, China, sustainability, farm tourism, rural areas, agriculture, entrepreneurship, COVID-19, satisfaction, motivation, rural revitalization, community-based tourism, ecotourism, social capital, and Spain.

into seven clusters in the network visualization. The top twenty most frequent co-occurring Keywords Plus, each appearing more than 75 times, were: rural tourism, management, tourism, model, impact, satisfaction, perceptions, destination, agritourism, areas, diversification, impacts, community, performance, agriculture, quality, attitudes, sustainability, motivation, and experience.

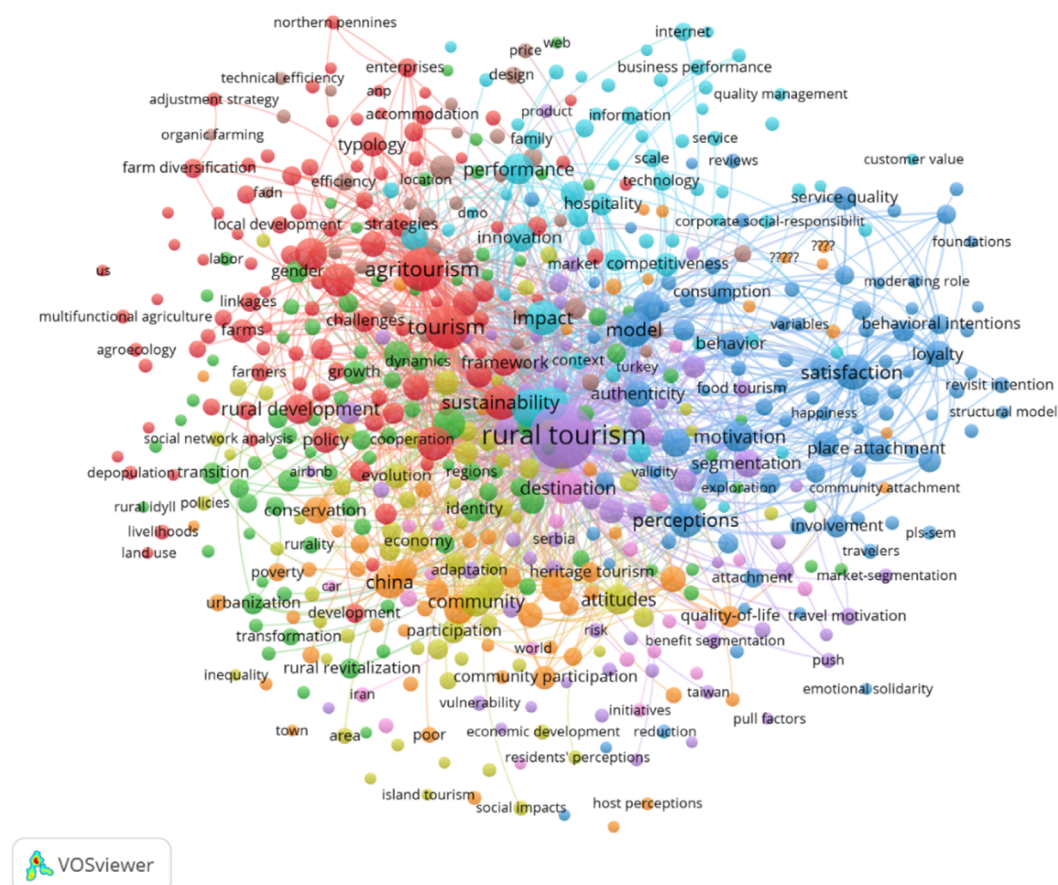


Fig. 5. VOSviewer co-occurrence network visualization mapping of the most frequent keywords in rural tourism and agritourism research, grouped into nine main clusters
Source: own elaboration.

most frequently used all keywords in this cluster, each appearing more than 29 times, are: agritourism, tourism, sustainability, sustainable development, agriculture, diversification, rural development, policy, framework, food, indicators, perspective, farm tourism, typology, strategies, farms, challenges, farm, ecosystem services, and community-based tourism.

Cluster 2 (Green) consists of 94 all keywords related to landscape identity. The top 21 all keywords, each occurring more than 18 times, are: landscape, place, growth, identity, gender, urbanization, transition, countryside, rural revitalization, destinations, patterns, social media, geography, employment, GIS, land, region, land-use, construction, and perception.

Cluster 3 (Blue) represents 90 all keywords associated with satisfaction models. The top 21 all keywords, each appearing more than 25 times, are: satisfaction, model, perceptions, motivation, quality, experience, authenticity, loyalty, behavior, place attachment, destination image, consumption, service quality, image, involvement, benefits, antecedents, dimensions, behavioral intentions, experiences, and residents.

Cluster 4 (Yellow) contains 65 all keywords related to heritage communities. The top 20 all keywords in this cluster, each occurring more than 18 times, are: community, attitudes, heritage, networks, evolution, governance, participation, economy, collaboration, culture, stakeholders, power, residents attitudes, social capital, issues, perspectives, space, cultural tourism, integrated rural tourism, and state.

Cluster 5 (Violet) focuses on rural tourism segmentation, with 62 all keywords. The top 22 all keywords in this cluster, each appearing more than 13 times, are: rural tourism, segmentation, demand, rural areas, visitors, environment, industry, Spain, local food, national park, decision-making, market segmentation, urban, adaptation, recreation, climate change, food tourism, travel motivation, cluster analysis, hotels, market, and seasonality.

Cluster 6 (Light Blue) involves 61 all keywords related to the management of sustainable tourism. The top 21 all keywords in this cluster, each appearing more than 13 times, are: management, impact, sustainable tourism, performance, innovation, entrepreneurship, motivations, competitiveness, hospitality, COVID-19, knowledge, entrepreneurs, technology, family, information, scale, firms, internet, context, agritourism, and business performance.

Cluster 7 (Orange) consists of 59 all keywords related to ecotourism impacts in China. The top 22 all keywords, each occurring more than 13 times, are: China, impacts, ecotourism, conservation, support, tourism development, community participation, province, village, quality-of-life, heritage tourism, sustainable rural tourism, residents perceptions, communities, protected areas, poverty, rural tourism development, livelihood, Okavango Delta, income, poor, and poverty alleviation.

Cluster 8 (Pink) involves 32 all keywords focused on big data preference models. The all keywords in this cluster include: determinants, preferences, models, efficiency, Extremadura, big data, design, attributes, island, insights, tool, price, willingness-to-pay, agricultural landscape, rural accommodation, valuation, data envelopment analysis, features, productivity, sharing economy, tourism potential, and more.

Cluster 9 (Brown) represents 23 all keywords related to travel and destination management. The top all keywords in this cluster are: destination, travel, leisure, mobility, destination management, destination marketing, Iran, qualitative research, revitalization, urban tourism, accessibility, initiatives, developing countries, firm, resident attitudes, world, local community, responsible tourism, car, competition, importance-performance analysis, ownership, and tourism destinations.

Burst of Keywords

Keywords exhibiting strong citation bursts often signal a new and impactful perspective that emerges within a specific period, highlighting a phase at the forefront of academic research. A keyword frequency analysis was conducted using CiteSpace (Basic version 6.3.R1) to identify the top 25 keywords in rural tourism and agritourism research from 2005 to 2024 (Fig. 7).

The keywords are ranked by the starting year of their citation bursts, with periods of heightened scholarly attention marked in red. By examining the duration of these citation bursts, emerging trends in rural tourism and agritourism research can be identified. The top 25 keywords with the most significant citation bursts are: rural tourism, farms, accommodation, areas, networks, service quality, farm tourism, diversification, farm diversification, motivation, behavioral intentions, local food, typology, segmentation, food, visitors, policy, dimensions, determinants, challenges, industry, systems, motivations, planned behavior, and place attachment.

Top 25 Keywords with the Strongest Citation Bursts



Fig. 7. Information about the top 25 keywords of Rural Tourism and Agritourism topic research with the strongest citation bursts from 2005 to 2024 by CiteSpace (6.3.R1)
Source: own elaboration.

Top Papers Based on Essential Science Indicators (ESI)

The top papers are determined by combining hot papers and highly cited papers, based on Clarivate Analytics' Essential Science Indicators (ESI). The ESI database

was last updated on September 12, 2024, and includes data covering a 10-year period (January 1, 2014–December 31, 2023) and a 6-month period (January 1, 2024–June 30, 2024).

According to the ESI database, 18 papers qualify as top papers, all of which are highly cited. These were published in the following years: 2014 (1), 2016 (1), 2017 (2), 2019 (1), 2020 (1), 2021 (6), 2022 (1), 2023 (2), and 2024 (3).

The journals with the most top papers include: “Tourism Management” (3), “International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management” (2), and “Journal of Rural Studies” (2). Other journals with top papers include: “Journal of Destination Marketing & Management” (1), “Journal of Destination Marketing & Management” (1), “Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management” (1), “Journal of Sustainable Tourism” (1), “Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing” (1), “Kybernetes” (1), “Land” (1), “Land Use Policy” (1), “Sustainable Development” (1), “Tourism Management Perspectives” (1), and “Tourism Review” (1).

The Most Frequently Cited Articles

The annual citations of the eight most frequently cited papers have shown a steady increase since publication (Fig. 8). These papers, authored by Sims (2009), Park and Yoon (2009), Loureiro (2014), Martín and Herrero (2012), Wratten et al. (2012), Devesa et al. (2010), Gao and Wu (2017), and Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017), have collectively garnered over 290 citations. As of October 8, 2024, total citations for each paper were: Sims (2009) – 750, Park and Yoon (2009) – 433, Loureiro

(2014) – 377, Martín and Herrero (2012) – 365, Wratten et al. (2012) – 338, Devesa et al. (2010) – 319, Gao and Wu (2017) – 311 and Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017) – 290 times. The average citations per year were 46.88, 27.06, 34.27, 28.08, 26, 21.27, 38.88 and 36.25, respectively. Among these, Sims (2009) had the highest average citation rate, with 46.88 citations per year. According to the ESI database, three of these papers – Loureiro (2014), Gao and Wu (2017), and Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017) – are classified as highly cited papers.

Citation Topics: Meso and Micro

This classification system follows a three-level hierarchical structure: Macro-topics (10), Meso-topics (326), and Micro-topics (2488). Based on the analysis results, there are 88 Meso-topics and 175 Micro-topics related to rural tourism and agritourism research papers. Table 5 presents the top 10 Meso-topics and Micro-topics across all research papers.

From Table 5, the top three Meso-topics are: 6.223 Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism (1,344 papers, 66.305%), 6.263 Agricultural Policy (107 papers, 5.279%), 3.40 Forestry (98 papers, 4.835%).

The top three Micro-topics are: 6.223.247 Tourism (1,299 papers, 64.085%), 3.40.635 Ecosystem Services (86 papers, 4.243%), 6.263.898 Farmers (85 papers, 4.193%).

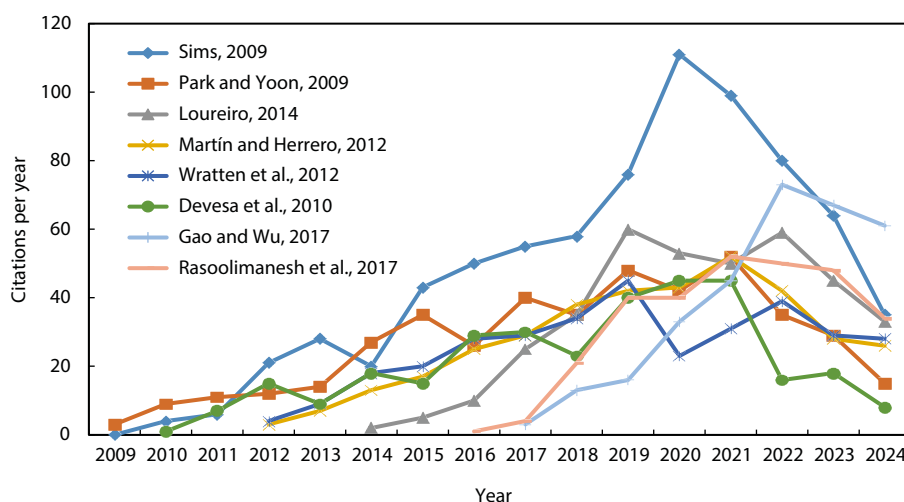


Fig. 8. Annual citations of the top eight papers in rural tourism and agritourism research from publications to October 8, 2024
Source: own elaboration.

Table 5. Comparison of the top 10 citations Meso-topics and Micro-topics for rural tourism and agritourism research papers

Rank	Citation Topics Meso			Citation Topics Micro		
	Meso-topics	No. papers	% of 2,027	Micro-topics	No. papers	% of 2,027
1	6.223 Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism	1344	66.305	6.223.247 Tourism	1299	64.085
2	6.263 Agricultural Policy	107	5.279	3.40.635 Ecosystem Services	86	4.243
3	3.40 Forestry	98	4.835	6.263.898 Farmers	85	4.193
4	6.3 Management	93	4.588	6.223.972 Place Attachment	34	1.677
5	6.115 Sustainability Science	33	1.628	6.3.65 Customer Satisfaction	32	1.579
6	6.73 Social Psychology	26	1.283	6.3.726 Entrepreneurship	23	1.135
7	6.86 Human Geography	26	1.283	6.73.1507 Environmental Concern	23	1.135
8	4.61 Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning	20	0.987	6.263.1407 Urban Agriculture	19	0.937
9	6.122 Economic Theory	19	0.937	6.122.1087 Contingent Valuation	18	0.888
10	6.153 Climate Change	13	0.641	4.61.56 Fuzzy Sets	14	0.691

Source: own elaboration.

Sustainable Development Goals

According to the InCites Benchmarking & Analytics Help File, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) schema enables exploration and analysis across 16 SDGs. Table 6 presents the SDGs related to rural

Table 6. Sustainable Development Goals for rural tourism and agritourism research papers

Rank	Sustainable Development Goals	Record count	% of 2,027
1	2	3	4
1	11 Sustainable Cities And Communities	1,455	71.781
2	15 Life On Land	131	6.463
3	02 Zero Hunger	119	5.871
4	09 Industry Innovation And Infrastructure	61	3.009
5	13 Climate Action	45	2.22
6	01 No Poverty	37	1.825
7	03 Good Health And Well Being	36	1.776
8	04 Quality Education	15	0.74
9	12 Responsible Consumption And Production	13	0.641

Table 6 – cont.

1	2	3	4
10	06 Clean Water And Sanitation	11	0.543
11	07 Affordable And Clean Energy	10	0.493
12	10 Reduced Inequality	6	0.296
13	14 Life Below Water	5	0.247
14	05 Gender Equality	2	0.099
15	08 Decent Work And Economic Growth	2	0.099
16	16 Peace And Justice Strong Institutions	1	0.049

Source: own elaboration.

tourism and agritourism research papers. The research papers cover all sixteen SDGs, with most focusing on three key goals: SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (1,455 papers, 71.781%), SDG 15: Life on Land (131 papers, 6.463%), SDG 02: Zero Hunger (119 papers, 5.871%).

CONCLUSIONS

This study analyzed 2,027 papers on rural tourism and agritourism research, predominantly written in English,

from 101 countries or regions. These papers were published across 389 journals and book series. The top five journals in this field “Sustainability”, “Tourism Management”, “Journal of Sustainable Tourism”, “Land”, “Current Issues in Tourism”. The leading five countries are China, Spain, Italy, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Through co-occurrence network visualization using VOSviewer, all keywords were grouped into nine distinct clusters, including agritourism and sustainable development, landscape identity, satisfaction models, heritage communities, rural tourism segmentation, sustainable tourism management, ecotourism impacts in China, big data preference models, and travel and destination management.

The majority of research focuses on three key Sustainable Development Goals: Sustainable Cities and Communities, Life on Land, and Zero Hunger. These areas offer valuable opportunities for further exploration. To maximize the impact and dissemination of their findings, authors are encouraged to prioritize factors such as international collaboration, leading institutions, journal selection, and a focused approach to rural tourism and agritourism.

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